

GRIEVANCES TO KING PHILIP III OF SPAIN

Taken from *The Fate and Fortunes of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone and Rory O'Donnell, earl of Tyrconnel* by C. P. Meehan. A transcript of a Memorial in reference to the College of Salamanca, which was presented by O'Donnell, on the 22nd of May, in the year 1602.

To His Catholic Royal Majesty, - The conde O'Donnell, of Ireland, kisses the feet of your majesty, and says that, in the kingdoms of your majesty, there are several colleges or seminaries for the instruction of Irish students, who, through the persecution of the heretics, cannot (in their own country) be instructed in the sound and Catholic doctrine; and that in particular your majesty has a college at Salamanca, which is maintained for this purpose by the charity of your majesty, added to the funds set apart for its support by the bishops and titularies of Spain.

Over this college presides a religion, a member of the Irish order of Jesuits, and a native of those provinces that are subject to the queen, and consequently schismatical, who does not entertain a pious affection for the open and avowed Irish Catholics of Ulster and Connaught, who have for so many years held arms in defence of the faith, and on this account does not wish to receive the students of these provinces; the truth being, that they more than any others ought to be sustained by the alms of the faithful, because of their having remained true Catholics and vassals of the Church and of your majesty, on which account it may be expected that they will produce better fruit than those who have been reared on such bad milk as obedience to the queen and an affectionate love for her interests, and (for persons) outside the pale of the Church; the result being, that, when they

return among their own people, they will let themselves be carried with the current, and thus do much more evil than if they had not studied at all, because they teach that it is permissible to obey the queen and to take arms against your majesty; and those that do so, they confess and absolve, and admit to Mass and the divine offices.

But those students are usually the sons of rich merchants, who could be educated at the expense of their parents, and who, if it were not to save the cost, would be sent to pursue their studies in England, like others of the same class. Even in Ireland itself, in those provinces subject to the queen, there are considerable facilities for study; but ours are Catholic of the Catholic, who cherish in their hearts obedience to the Church, and who from their cradle abhor the accursed sect of the queen, and proclaim against it. Owing to continual wars, they have no means or opportunities of study; those who come to Spain are the sons of the nobles who have lost their properties for the faith, and have no means of obtaining the advantages possessed by the others.

For these and other reasons I supplicate your majesty, on the part of O'Neill and of myself, and on behalf of those two provinces, that your majesty will command that the said seminary of Salamanca shall receive one-half of its students from Ulster and Connaught. For the carrying out of this arrangement, it will be necessary to remove from the administration of the college the religious who at present directs it, whose name is Thomas White, and to appoint a Spanish rector to preside over it, who will punctually obey the orders he shall receive, because it is certain that the father referred to will always be prepared with plausible excuses for rejecting those students; and even should he be compelled by force to receive them, he will treat them in a way that will be impossible to be endured. In this

acting, your majesty will do a great service to our Lord, and confer the greatest possible benefit and an especial favour on the true Catholics of Ireland.

Maurice Ultan, of the country of the conde O'Donnell, and Edmund Donaldino, of the country of the conde O'Neill, sons of rich and honourable vassals of those lords, who have lost all their property in their service, and who, in consequence, were not admitted into any of the houses of study which the Irish have in these parts, entreat his majesty that he may be pleased to make some arrangement for their studies at Salamanca. His majesty could remedy this necessity of these honourable students, and many others who are suffering much anxiety at this court, by commanding that these two students be received forthwith into the Irish seminary of Salamanca; and it would be of great importance, and would materially tend to the advantage of that kingdom, if it were expressly commanded that, for the future, as many students should be received into that seminary from Connaught and Ulster as from Munster and Leinster, since the two former divisions contain as much land as the two latter, and because his majesty founded that college, not for one province alone, but for the whole kingdom. And that the said order may be carried out in its integrity, it is not enough that this majesty should command it, but that he should name a member of the council to be the defender and protector of that seminary.

The reasons which seem to the padre fray Florencio to require this reformation are numerous, some of which cannot fail to move the compassion of a heart so Catholic as that of his majesty, as well as of the very Christian hearts of the members of his council.